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Message Text

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20
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6025

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EO 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: INTERNAL REPLACEMENTS

1. IN LONG-EXPECTED ANNOUNCEMENT JULY 23, COMMAND COUNCIL REPLACED YAHYA MUTAWAKKIL AS MININTERIOR BY FORMER TAIZ SECURITY CHIEF, MUHSIN MUHAMMAD AL-YUSUFI. AT SAME TIME, RELIABLY REPORTED THAT CCC HAMDI HAS ORDERED NATIONAL SECURITY HEAD, ABD AL-WAHID AL-SIYAGHI, PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST PENDING INVESTIGATION OF CHARGES HE REGULARLY AND ABITRARILY DETAINED SCORES OF INNOCENT INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT PROPER GROUNDS--SOME FOR AS LONG AS SIX MONTHS. THOSE PERSONS CURRENTLY BEING DETAINED--WILL HAVE CASES REVIEWED ON INDIVIDUAL BASIS BY HIGH LEVEL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE HEADED BY MINSTATE SALAH AL-MASRI (FORMER ROYALIST MINWAR). AL-SIYAGHI'S REMOVAL COINCIDES WITH JULY 21 COMMAND COUNCIL DECREE REQUIRING MINPTERIOR TO HENCEFORTH ENFORCE ALL PROVISIONS OF DETENTION AND IMPRISONMENT LAW AND TO DETAIN INDIVIDUALS ONLY ON ORDERS FROM "AUTHORIZED SOURCES".

2. HAMDI'S REPLACEMENT OF MUTAWAKKIL COMES AS NO SURPRISE. LATTER VIEWED AS SYMPATHETIC TO ABU LUHUM-AYNI GROUP FOLLOWING 1974 "CORRECTIVE MOVEMENT", ALTHOUGH IN RECENT MONTHS TRIED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH HAMDI. MUTAWAKKIL'S SUCCESSFOR IS MUHSIN AL-YUSUFI WHO RETURNED TO YAR JULY 21 AFTER COMPLETING CU LEADERSHIP GRANT. PRIOR TO THIS ASSIGNMENT, AL-YUSUFI WAS
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DIRECTOR OF GENERAL SECURITY FOR TAIZ GOVERNORATE, A POSITION

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HE ALSO HELD 1970-74. FOR BRIEF PERIOD IN 1974, AL-YUSUFI
WAS CHIEF-OF-STATE AS MININTERIOR.

3. ABD AL-WAHID AL-SIYAGHA--UNTIL JULY 6 DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL
SECURITY--PRESIDENT'S OFFICE--WAS EARLY PROTEGE OF FORMER
PRESIDENT IRYANI TO WHOM HE REPORTEDLY DIRECTLY. IN RECENT
YEARS, OPERATED OFFICES ALMOST AS GOVERNMENT UNTO ITSELF AND
WAS AS UNPOPULAR WITH HIS OWN SUBORDINATES AS HE WAS WITH
POPULATION AT LARGE. IMPORTANCE DECLINED CONSIDERABLY AFTER
HAMDI'S TAKEOVER IN JUNE 1974, AND AL-SIYAGHI'S ATTEMPT TO STAY
IN POWER BY DREAMING UP SERIES OF SPY PLOTS WAS GROWING
EMBARRASSMENT TO HAMDI GOVERNMENT AND STOOD IN MARKED CONTRAST
TO MUHAMMAD KHAMIS' MORE SOBERLY RUN INTERNAL SECURITY
ORGANIZATION (MININTERIOR). INDICATIONS THAT AL-SIYAGHI'S
FIEFDOM ABOUT TO DISINTEGRATE FIRST APPEARED IN JULY 6 ANNOUNCEMENT
THAT BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS WOULD BE
MERGED INTO NEW CENTRAL ORGANIZATION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY
TO BE HEADED BY MUHAMMAD KHAMIS WITH NO MENTION MADE OF AL-
SIYAGHI'S STATUS.

4. COMMENT: OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS HAMDI ADMINISTRATION
HAS ATTEMPTED BOTH TO CONSOLIDATE HOLD ON IMPORTANT GOVERNMENTAL
AND MILITAAY INSTITUTIONS AND TO VISIBLE DEMONSTRATE TO YEMENI
POPULACE THAT REGIME MEANS TO IMPLEMENT POLITICAL,
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SOCIAL REFORMS. MUTAWAKKIL'S REPLACEMENT
BY ABLE NEW FIGURE UNTAINTED BY EARLIER AYNI-HAMDI POLITICAL
MANOEURVINGS VIEWED AS IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVEMENT OF
FIRST GOAL. SIMILARLY, AL-SIYAGHI'S DOWNFALL SUPPORTIVE OF
BOTH OBJECTIVES. NOT ONLY WILL REMOVAL OF THIS INCOMPETENT
AND OFTEN BRUTAL NATIONAL SECURITY CHIEF IMPROVE REGIME'S
PUBLIC IMAGE, BUT THE APPOINTMENT OF MUHAMMAD KHAMIS AS HEAD
OF NEW, CENTRALIZED, SECURITY ORGANIZATION ASSURES HAMDI THAT A
TRUSTWORTHY AND LOYAL FRIEND IS NOW OVERSEER OF YARG'S SECURITY
INHGRESTS. THE REPLACEMENT ALSO REFLECTS THE METHODICAL
CAUTIOUS BUT RELENTLESS STYLE OF HAMDI IN CONSOLIDATING A
POSITION OF POWER WHICH HAS NO RPT NO RECENT PARALLELS IN YEMENI
POLITICS.
SCOTES

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